

WORLEY HURT—WYCOMBE'S BRAVE TEN FAIL

By "Chiltern"

St. Albans 2, Wycombe Wanderers 1.

IT'S back. That fighting spirit that deserted Wycombe Wanderers half way through December returned on Saturday when they lost at St. Albans. After losing Len Worley in the 16th minute with an ankle injury they had to fight all the way. And throughout they gave as good as they got, defending doggedly and attacking intelligently.

The lethargy of recent weeks had gone. Wycombe deserved at least a point and very nearly got it. They scored first, 12 minutes after half-time, and St. Albans only settled the issue seven minutes from the end.

Right from the start Worley proved to be a thorn in the St. Albans side. His tricky runs had their defence at sixes and sevens and in the sixth minute he beat three men to shoot low across the goalmouth, Wanderers' first real scoring effort.

Tragedy struck when Worley and Woods both went for a low pass. The players clashed and Worley collapsed rolling in agony. He was treated for at least three minutes on the field and for a further ten on the touchline before being carried into the dressing-room.

After he had failed to reappear for the second half he told me from the steam of the dressing-room bath that he had received a hard knock on the ankle he broke some seasons ago.

ROYSTONE IN

Keith Samuels had to be left out of the side after a knee injury received the previous week failed to respond to treatment, and Peter Roystone was brought in to play the role of a second centre-half in an experimental four, three, three line-up.

It worked well. Even with ten men for 74 minutes of the game Wanderers were rarely at full-stretch. With Rundle dropping into a centre-back position between Bradshaw and Beck the defence always looked solid. The players were so happy with it that after the game they asked team-manager Barry Darvill if they can try it again.

The first-half was not a very

thrilling affair. Wycombe started better, but both sides had shots saved. The game swung from end to end and was dominated by tight defences. With their striking power cut to three forwards Wanderers could hope for little more than a draw.

Yet they continued to press early in the second-half, and their effort was rewarded in the 57th minute. Bates crossed from the right-wing, Horseman swung and missed and Les Merrick, Wycombe's best forward, smacked the ball past Fowler.

Four minutes later Butterfield, St. Albans', 16-stone leader, equalised with a header that gave Maskell no chance.

Wanderers continued to press, but playing for such a long time with 10 men began to take its toll and as the game drew to a close St. Albans piled on the pressure.

WINNER

In the 83rd minute Desmond scored their winner after Gladwin's shot had bounced awkwardly for the diving Maskell and rebounded to the inside-right's right foot.

Martin Gladwin, St. Albans' recent capture from Hitchin, laid on both his side's goals.

The whole of the Wycombe side played well with Barry Baker putting in a prodigious amount of work, and full-backs Bradshaw and Beck having great games.

Rundle and Gale were again impressive and Roystone worked as hard as always. Horseman showed some nice touches and always looked dangerous in front of goal. He narrowly missed adding to Wycombe's tally with a flying header. Bates missed Worley and showed he is less effective on the right wing. He showed well when he burst through to shoot.

St. Albans: W. Fowler; D. Lawrence, R. Last; B. Nisbett, D. Bromley, P. Wood; M. Gladwin, R. Agar, B. Butterfield, D. Desmond, R. Wing.

Wycombe: J. Maskell; D. Bradshaw, J. Beck; B. Baker, I. Rundle, C. Gale; L. Worley, P. Roystone, P. Bates, T. Horseman, L. Merrick.